

Iowa Work Incentive Planning and Assistance

The Social Security Administration (SSA) has awarded cooperative agreements to establish **Community-based Work Incentives Planning and Assistance** projects in every state. The purpose of these projects is to disseminate accurate information to beneficiaries with disabilities (including transition-to-work aged youth) to enable them to make informed choices about working and whether or when to assign their Ticket to Work, as well as how other available work incentives can facilitate their transition into the workforce. **The ultimate goal of the Work Incentives Planning and Assistance projects is to assist SSA beneficiaries with disabilities succeed in their return to work efforts.**

IWIPA Vision:

Once implementation has been completed, **Iowa desires to have a Network of Professionals across the state who have a basic understanding of SSA's vision and purpose with work incentives**, so no matter where beneficiaries live, there will be people who will encourage them in pursuing careers and in their full participation in the economies of their communities. **This network will include professionals in employment services, case management, rehabilitation programs, advocacy organizations and SSA Employment Networks.** This network will strengthen the overall customer service efforts in benefits management through connections to benefits planning services offered by IWIPA staff and other benefit planners supported by Iowa agencies. This network of professionals will be called **Benefit Liaisons (BL)**.

Benefit Liaisons (BL) will be trained by the **Community Work Incentive Coordinators (CWIC)** on the basics of the Social Security Work incentives. This will include information on how earnings will affect the individuals benefits and how to identify other valuable work incentives that may be available. The BL's will provide information to the CWIC's so that the CWIC's, who are trained Benefit Planners can fully assess an individuals current benefits and available work incentives. If a work incentive is available the CWIC will provide the on-going support and benefit management for the individual. **The CWIC will provide technical assistance to the BL's in answering the questions individuals may have about their benefits.** They will also provide training, free of charge to the BL's. This will involve an initial orientation, quarterly trainings and on-going support.